Found Family - ‘I can’t do this’

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Found Family - ‘I can’t do this’

by reid_simp

Summary

Ben is struggling a lot with what’s happened to Jay and doesn’t think he can cope

Ben sits at Jay's side, remembering everything he's said to him since he started spiralling. Every mistake he made. He goes back in time, too. Back to every mistake he's made, allowing Jay and Lola to ever break up, ever letting that happen, because they could have been happy for so much longer if it wasn't for petty mistakes and misunderstandings.

He should have stayed with him. Told Lexi to stay with Billy and Honey until he and Callum had sorted him out. He should have looked after Jay like he'd looked after him when he was at his worst last year. There after his overdose, when he was a mess, when he was horrible to people around him.

Maybe he crashed because his head wasn't clear. Maybe if Ben had just been there for him, he wouldn't have gotten in the car, wouldn't have crashed the car. He wouldn't be in this bed right now, tearing Ben apart.

Callum brought him a breakfast bar in earlier, but Ben couldn't do anything but smell it without gagging. He's basically been surviving off them because they've been the only thing he can eat without having to purge. His safe food; not particularly good in the long term, but a temporary solution while his counciling does some wonders. Callum gave him a sympathetic smile and held his hand when he gave up after nibbling the corner, returning his attention to Jay.

They're on the night shift. Billy and Honey have gone home to look after the kids and get some sleep. They were meant to sleep in the day, but Ben hadn't been able. He'd set the kids up in the lounge with Netflix on, and had stayed in his room, feeling the tugs of depression clawing at him, threatening to bring him back to the mentality of before, when the only way he was able to get through each day was the picture of Lexi on his lock screen. The reminder of her.
If Jay dies, he doesn't know what he'll do.
He thinks it might just be it for him. He can't take anymore.

He started dissociating an hour ago. It's the lack of sleep, he reminds himself. It's the fact that he can't think about anything other than his brother in the bed in front of him. And he can't handle it.
Callum tells him to text his councillor, tell her what's happening and how he's feeling, because they don't have an appointment for nearly a week. Ben wants to, but can't type the words, because then it will be real. Then it's happening, not just some twisted nightmare.

"I can't... I can't do this, Cal." He whispers. They've been sat in silence for a while now. It's just the two of them, but Ben could swear he feels Lola in the room with them. "I- This- This is just... just too- too much." He pauses, whimper escaping. "I can't do this."

He's been being such a good dad since he sold the Arches. He's been doing really well, especially since he started getting counselling. He's been pulling his life together and trying to live in the 'after' of Lola's death. Living beyond what happened last year, his whole life. Trying to pick up the pieces and build the life he wants with Callum and Lexi. And Jay. Jay's his brother, his family. He can't do this. It's falling apart, and he can't function, can't pull himself together.

He doesn't think he can look Lexi in the eye without breaking down, because she's lost everything. She's just lost her mum, facing the idea of losing her step-dad, and having a father who can't even hold it together long enough to make her lunches or wash her school clothes because that was Lola's job. The things he's had to pick up, the prospect of being her *only* parent – Callum busy looking after him – is tearing him apart.

He just can't do this.

"I know, Ben. I know." No point trying to console him, trying to be okay and get through this with a brave face. Ben and Callum know he's simply been through too much in the last few years for that to be an option. "I can do this, Ben. I'll be strong for the both of us, okay?" He takes hold of Ben's hand. "Whatever happens, I'm here."

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